



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **North Dakota Observes National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

BISMARCK, N.D. – March 10, 2008, marks the third annual National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, according to Krissie Mayer, HIV/AIDS Program director for the North Dakota Department of Health.

The event is held each year to increase awareness of the growing epidemic of HIV in women and girls in the United States. This year's theme is "Honoring Our Sisters: Women Living with HIV/AIDS" and encourages women and girls to take action.

Since 1985, the proportion of estimated AIDS cases in women has tripled, and today women account for more than one-quarter of all new HIV/AIDS diagnoses. Historically, more men than women become infected with HIV, but if the rate of new infections among women continues at the current rate worldwide, women with HIV will soon outnumber men with HIV.

Women can do many things to take action against this devastating epidemic. HIV can be prevented by avoiding risky behaviors, such as unprotected sex and needle-sharing for drug use, or tattooing and body piercing. Also, know your status and get tested for HIV. When you know your status, you take an active stance against the spread of HIV. Although there is no cure for HIV, people are living stronger and longer with current treatment methods.

For information about HIV testing and other HIV/AIDS services, call the North Dakota Department of Health HIV/AIDS Program hotline at 800.70.NDHIV or visit the program's website at [www.ndhealth.gov/hiv](http://www.ndhealth.gov/hiv).

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